

TULARE COUNTY DOMESTIC VIOLENCE TASK FORCE

Meeting Minutes

January 23, 2007

Opening: The regular meeting was called to order at 4:10 p.m. by Steve Kennedy. The meeting was held at the CASA office, Visalia, CA.

Attendees: Steve Kennedy, Lana French, Phil Esbenshade, Linda Compo-Blazich, Joan Cuadra, Esmeralda Ramos, Jim Franks and Carla Khal

General Announcements/Sub-committee reports:

TCSO – announced that they are applying for two new grants to replace current grant which covers services through mid-May 2006. They still just have one detective assigned

CCLS – announced that due to Suzanne Swenk's promotion, they currently do not have an attorney to represent anyone in family law/DV cases. They are looking for someone new. Also certain Judges are allowing advocates to question witnesses during DV hearings. Advocates should be made aware that they may have that opportunity.

DCSS – Phil Esbenshade introduced himself and indicated that he will be representing DCSS at these meetings.

Proteus – is also applying for new grant money to continue doing an educational piece regarding DV.

Superior Court – the Family Law Bench is working to educate law enforcement agencies of their duty to provide free police reports to DV victims. Judge Hicks has held a meeting with the Chiefs.

Family Services – announced a training to be held 2/6/07 in Fresno which offers a legal update for DV. This is meant to address the problem of criminal filings being down statewide due to reluctant or recanting victims. Detailed information on registration is available from Linda. Linda continues to offer training to agencies throughout the county. Also, Linda stated that the Final Report is due soon on the current grant being administered by TCSO.

Approval of Minutes: Linda moved and Joan seconded to approve the minutes of the last meeting. Motion passed.

Open Issues/Old Business:

The information cards distributed by law enforcement officers are ready and are being have gone out to the agencies.

New Business:

Linda initiated a discussion of non-CLETS restraining orders being issued by the Bench. She expressed concerns – shared by TCSO – that such orders leave victims in danger and will not be enforced. The use of these is typically where the perpetrator needs to carry a gun for employment. Linda asked that this concern be discussed by the Family Bench. Carla offered to have it placed on the next agenda for the Family Law division meeting.

Linda announced that the DAs office has re-activated its Child Abduction Unit. Melody Flores is the assigned investigator. A protocol should be developed to have DV victims call the CA Unit to let them know where they are and that the children are safe to avoid unnecessary investigations when calls are received from the other parent.

Lana announced that CCLS is again helping with VAWA applications for DV victims who have citizenship and residency issues.

There being no further business, Jim moved and Esmeralda seconded to adjourn the meeting at 4:55 p.m.

The next meeting will be April 24, 2007 at 4:00 p.m. at the CASA office.
Other 2007 meeting dates are: July 24 and October 23.

Submitted by: Carla R. D. Khal, Family Law Facilitator, Superior Court